



City of Cincinnati

Date: June 14, 2002

For Immediate Release

Contact: Peg Moertl, Director
Community Development
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NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

WHERE: Mehring Way, Lot D (between the stadiums)

WHEN: June 17, 2002, 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Nick Clooney, Master of Ceremonies

Special Guests: First Lady Laura Bush, Governor Bob Taft, & Muhammad Ali

Performances by: Medasi African Dance and Drum Ensemble
Bucket Boys and Bucketts
Over-the-Rhine Steel Drum Band
500 Voice Choir

Fireworks

In August 1997, Cincinnati City Council pledged to provide \$6 million over five years for planning, architectural, and exhibit design services for the Freedom Center. The final \$1.5 million payment to the Freedom Center, completing the City's financial commitment, was made in April 2002. City Development staff assisted the Freedom Center throughout the Central Riverfront Master Plan process to obtain the centerpiece site, between Vine and Walnut Streets immediately north of the historic Roebling Suspension Bridge. The City is also funding approximately \$800,000 in infrastructure improvements associated with the Freedom Center as part of the central riverfront capital improvements.

The mission of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center is to educate the public about the historic struggle to abolish human enslavement and secure freedom for all people. The Freedom Center will teach lessons of courage and cooperation from Underground Railroad history to promote collaborative learning, dialogue, and action in order to insure today's freedom movements.

PARTICIPANTS: Mayor Charlie Luken
City Councilmembers
Valerie Lemmie, City Manager
Peg Moertl, Community Development Director

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